# Down to Earth

Michigan State University Extension Master Gardener Program—Genesee County January-February Winter 2021



## Letter from the Program Coordinator

Barslund Judd (juddbars@msu.edu)

Have you bought this season's seeds, yet? I hope you have! This year I'm focusing on my color gardens, specifically my orange/red/yellow and purple/blue gardens. It's so much fun to have bright, bold, flowerbeds. I'm adding 'Amazing Grey' poppies to my purple/ blue garden, along with bachelor's buttons and butterfly peas to complement my existing Blue False Indigo and lavender rose. In my orange/red/yellow garden, I'll be adding variegated cockscomb. I can't wait to see how it looks next to my Tiger Eyes sumac!

We have an Extension Master Gardener class starting March 6. The deadline for signing up is February 26<sup>th</sup> <u>(see link</u>). It will be an online class conducted over Zoom on Saturday mornings from 9:00-1:00 p.m. If you have friends who are interested in the program, send them my way! We still have a few spots open. The class being fully online is a first for us and we are really excited to join up with Wayne County.

Have fun planning your gardens and don't hesitate to email me pictures of the seeds you've purchased for this year! We would love to share your seed growing progress in future newsletters!



Tiger Eye Sumac—Angela Carson (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

**Barslund Judd** 

If you are interested in writing an article for the DTE newsletter, please feel free to reach out to us! We specifically need someone to pick up the **Gardening With Kids** monthly article. We heard there were teachers in the last EMG Class who might find this topic right up their alley! You get volunteer hours for

contributing to the DTE. We ask that articles have an educational component that is research based and utilizes solid sources.

### Inside this issue

Letter from the Coordinator1				
Feature Article2				
Project Report3				
Outreach News/Flower of Month.4				
Garden with Kids5				
Time to Harvest6				
VMS Corner, Flower Con't7				
Ask Extension8				
President's Note9				
MGAGCM Membership App10				
Article, Continued11				
MGAGCM Calendar12				

### Newsletter Committee

- Loretta Ellwood (Project Report)
- Mary Yelland (Article Liaison)
- Mel Kennedy (Ask Extension)
- Joanne Gensel (Association Page)
- Michelle Chockley (VMS Coordinator)
- Carol Pittard (Editor)
- Cheryl Borkowski (Format Editor)

# **Feature Article**

# Virginia Waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*) and Other Native Plants for Shade

### by Jane Giblin

Have you ever tried growing native woodland species in mesic to dry soil conditions under a tall, mature conifer without amending the soil, mulching or supplementing with water when the early spring rains end? This is an area under a Colorado spruce, one of two planted in the early '60s, remaining on my property, where even the native ginger wilts by early July. A



few years ago a friend gave me a couple of Virginia waterleaf plants from his yard, telling me I needed a midspring blooming groundcover to fill in after the ephemerals had faded. I had my doubts! Given my penchant for neglect in the heat of the summer, the waterleaf soon disappeared. But the following early spring I was delighted to see the green sprouts along with a small carpet of seedlings. Virginia Waterleaf is native to North America from Wisconsin and Illinois east to the Atlantic coast, south to Missouri and North Carolina, found in moist to wet wooded areas, and thriving in rich, loamy soil. So why does it grow well in my conditions?

The plants grow from a tuft of fibrous roots, and rhizomes and can form large colonies. The life strategy of a rhizomatous plant is for energy storage during the vegetative growth period from early May to late summer, along with the

capacity for active growth and branching of the rhizomes in late autumn and winter. And some of this growing space has been additionally populated by seedlings that survived over the years, acclimating to the drier situation.

Besides the capacity to grow in my less-than-ideal environment, Virginia waterleaf is an appealing, attractive upright groundcover with deeply lobed leaves, toothed margins, with characteristic 'water stain' blotches on the leaves. Hence, the name! Delicate flowers, white, pink to lavender in charming bellshaped clusters with conspicuous hairy stamens, appear in midspring on tall stems. It self-seeds freely, indicating that its pollinators are successful, and then flowers in the second or third year. The plants will die back in summer if the soil dries out. New seedlings sprout in late fall with increased rainfall and cooler temperatures.

Virginia waterleaf provides early forage resources for many types of solitary native bees and other pollinators. Queen bumble bees visit the flowers for nectar and pollen in the early spring. Green sweat bees and small carpenter bees climb into the

flower to access nectar and feed on pollen from the protruding anthers. Mason bees and mining bees nectar on the flowers and provision their nests with pollen. Other common visitors include Syrphid flies, ants and black weevils. This native plant can be a great choice to quickly fill in wooded areas or stream edges where invasives such as garlic mustard or buckthorn have been removed. But it may be more assertive than desired in a small landscape if the growing conditions (shady and moist with loamy soil) are similar to its preferred natural habitat.

In my space it has combined well with wild ginger (*Asarum canadensis*) and Celandine poppy (*Stylophorum diphylum*) and is slowly growing into the nearby Ostrich fern (*Matteuccia stru-thiopteris*) area. I plan to add more spring ephemerals, blood root (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) and Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) to the community. And I'm trying to see if it will out-compete vinca (*Vinca minor*), Chameleon plant (*Houttuynia cordata*) and Bishop's goutweed (*Aegopodium*) that is creeping in from a neighbor's yard.

Other suggested complementary plants are white baneberry (*Actea pachypoda*), wild columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*), blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), early meadow rue (*Thalictrum dioicum*), trout lily (*Erythronium americanum*) and false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum racemose*).

*This article, written by Extension Master Gardener Jane Giblin, is reproduced in part from the WAM Fall 2020 Newsletter with permission of the Wildflower Association of Michigan.* 



ginia waterleaf in flower Photo: Betty Seagull

# **Project Report**

### **Genesee County MDOT Rest Areas in 2020**

by Loretta Ellwood

The year 2020 was a challenge for the local rest areas. I worked at US-23 (Fenton), I-75 North (Dodge Road) and I-75 South (Clio). I have been the project lead at Fenton for several years, was a helper at Clio for a couple of years, and when Ruth Sutton retired this year, agreed to keep Dodge Road going until we could get past the restrictions. Things did not go quite as planned due to the pandemic.

MDOT likes to have the rest areas cleaned up, mulched and planted by Memorial Day since it is the first major vacation weekend of the summer and a busy one. Because of the restrictions, we were not able to start working at the sites until mid-June. With the late start, many of the plants that we usually get for these sites were not available because the nurseries hadn't produced as many plants or they were sold out. That meant we had to come up with substitutes. Unfortunately, even if a substitute was found, there weren't always enough available. So annual plantings were sparse at the larger rest areas.



Even with the late start, everything was not bad. For one thing, MDOT did not have to buy mulch for the Genesee County rest areas. On US-23, while the State Police were doing one of their periodic checks on trucks traveling the freeways, a semi full of mulch was found to be overweight and it was not allowed to leave until it had met the weight requirement. This was a blessing for the rest areas. It was a high-grade mulch. The excess was dumped on the truck side of the US-23 site and the company gave it to MDOT rather than have someone come and get it. There was so much that MDOT was able to distribute it among all the Genesee County

rest areas!

Another good thing, being unable to get the usual plants, was that we had to use

alternatives. This was an opportunity to get to know other plant varieties. With no Profusion Zinnias available, we used marigold varieties instead. *(see photo)* They did very well and garnered many compliments. I was introduced to County Fair Zinnias that did very well, but were tall and frequently needed to be staked. A new variety of Angelonia (Archangel) was awesome. It bloomed vigorously and the colors were spectacular. The Lantana variety we planted this year also did extremely well. So well that, when we were doing Fall cleanup, we felt bad pulling them out because they still looked so good and the root systems were so large and strong that we had to dig them out. The hydrangea tree blooms at US-23 were large and numerous. (See photo) Louie, the manager at that site, would on occasion cut one for an admirer.



There were more insect issues beyond the aphids on the milkweed plants mentioned in the Winter Issue article I wrote last month. The four-lined plant bugs, which we first noticed and identified in 2019, came back with a vengeance especially since they were left unchecked because of our late start. The larvae and adults inflicted the most extensive injury to the asters at the Clio site. After a severe cut back of the damage, the plants bounced back and did very well. We hope that we cleaned up well enough in the fall that maybe there won't be so many of them this coming spring. We hope we can monitor the area earlier this upcoming year so we can use mechanical or cultural control to keep them in check.

[Four-lined plant bug information from Dr. Dave Smitley at MSU can be found at this site.]

### Continued on page 10

# **Outreach News, Birth Month Flowers**

### **Outreach News**

By Kay McCullough

At this time, there are no upcoming events that need EMG volunteers. Stay tuned!

## January Birth Month Flowers – Carnation and Snowdrop

### By Michelle Chockley

**Carnation** (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) – A fragrant herbaceous perennial, carnations can be grown as annuals, too. They are one of the most popular cut flowers. They grow in the sun, but like cooler temperatures, and rich organic soil. To learn more, please check out these websites: <a href="https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/dianthus-caryophyllus/">https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/dianthus-caryophyllus/</a>



Missouri Botanical Gardens has this cultivar, but tells about the species, too. https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx? taxonid=243667&isprofile=0& http://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/carn.html https://pss.uvm.edu/pss123/fcdian.html



**Snowdrop** (*Galanthus*) – This will be popping up now until March, which is perfect timing as they are symbolic for hope and rebirth (mythology)! Michigan is one of only 16 states where snowdrops have naturalized, but they are really native to Europe and western Asia in their woodlands. To learn more:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/snow\_drops\_are\_springs\_joyful\_early\_warning\_system https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/galanthus-nivalis/ https://extension.psu.edu/snowdrops https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/cass/Snowdrops.pdf https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/article/snowdrops-galanthus-spp/ https://www.chicagobotanic.org/plantinfo/snowdrops

# February Birth Month Flowers – Violet and Primrose



**Violet** (*Viola*) – There are over 500 species, so which one to pick! The common violet is considered a nuisance to some and a beauty others. If you are looking to remove them from your lawn, check out these websites:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/tough\_to\_control\_broadleaf\_weeds\_flowering http://www.msuturfweeds.net/details/\_/wild\_violet\_17/ https://turf.purdue.edu/wild-violets/ If you love the flush of these purple flowers, they are also a host for a range of fritillaries. The mining bee also seeks out this violet as a host plant. For more information: https://xerces.org/blog/plants-for-pollinators-violets https://www.nababutterfly.com/violet.html

Continued on page 7

# Gardening with Kids... Making Newspaper Seed Starting Pots

### **By Mary Yelland**



While it is too early to start most seeds for planting in the spring, it is time to dream and plan. Part of the plan could include making pots in which to start seeds. These pots are easy to make with just a few supplies, are practically free, and are environmentally friendly. Some people ask about the ink in the newspaper, but most modern newspapers use soy-based inks that are fine for the plants.

You will need:

A soup can, or other can around the size you wish your pot to be Some newspaper Scissors and glue or a glue stick

1. To start, open a full-size newspaper and cut down its fold in the middle. Take one of the pieces and fold it in half the long way so you have a long skinny paper.

2. Using the can as a guide, wrap the paper around it to form a cylinder with a couple inches extending past the can's bottom. After the whole sheet is wrapped around, glue the edge so it stays in place



3. Take the paper extending beyond the bottom of the can and fold it inward in several places to form the bottom of the pot. (see photo) Glue as necessary to keep the paper in place so that a base is formed.

4. Remove the pot from the can. To make the pot sturdier, you can fold over a bit on the top to make a lip on the top of the pot. If your pot seems too tall or short, or too thick or thin, adjust the size of the newspaper you use accordingly. At this point, let it dry and wait until it's time to plant!

5. When it's time to plant, fill the paper pot with a potting mix and it is ready to start a seed.

6. After the plants have grown and are ready to be transplanted outside, you can put the whole pot in the ground and the newspaper will decompose. However, it will be better for the little plant if you rip open the newspaper to stop the roots from staying in their previously confined space. If you plant the whole pot, make sure none of the newspaper is sticking up out of the ground.

# Time to Harvest ..... Dried Beans

### By Mary Yelland

Beans, Beans, The Magical Fruit... While the rhyme may bring back childhood memories, beans really are magical. They are the highest source of non-meat protein, higher in fiber than any other unprocessed food, low in fat, and are extremely versatile. While technically dried beans are already out of the field and home gardens, in a sense mine are still being harvested. In the rush of other fall harvest and garden chores and then the holidays, I'm just getting to shelling the dried beans. They are the last of the garden harvest to get used and they don't have to be canned or frozen.

Michigan is the second largest (passed by North Dakota) dried bean producing state with over 400 million pounds a year. Most of our beans are grown in Huron County, which is one of the top dry bean-producing counties in the country. There are over a dozen different kinds of dried beans. Black beans and navy beans are the top beans grown in Michigan. Dried beans, like green beans, are a warm season crop and planted in late spring after the ground has warmed. However, dried beans are left to grow until the pods mature and dry on the plant. They are then picked, shelled (sometimes in January or February), and stored. They can last for years. Beans are great as a rotation crop because they can fix nitrogen, meaning they can take nitrogen from the air and "fix" it into compounds usable by plants. Sales of dried beans have soared in the last year because of the pandemic. It may be hard to find more than a few kinds in the store, but several varieties are available by seed to grow your own. Beans are also a great plant to start with seed saving as they are self-pollinating and are not usually hybrids.

Most kinds of dried beans are interchangeable in recipes depending on your preference. Dried beans should be soaked and cooked before use. They cook great in a pressure cooker or Instant Pot. See cooking instructions here: <a href="https://extension.psu.edu/dry-beans-a-pantry-staple">https://extension.psu.edu/dry-beans-a-pantry-staple</a>. Beans are often used in soups, but the enjoyment doesn't stop there. They can be blended for dips, utilized in salads, seasoned and fried into patties, and even used as a flour replacement in pasta or desserts. Here are a couple bean recipes to try. The first is for a bean salad recipe that is great as a side or even a main dish. To show just how versatile beans can be the second recipe is for black bean brownies. They are gluten free, sweetened with honey or maple syrup, and have no butter or shortening. I was a bit skeptical but tried them and they are pretty good for a healthy dessert.

### Southwest Style Bean Salad

- 1 ½ cups cooked pinto beans, drained and rinsed\* 1 ½ cups cooked corn
- 1 orange or yellow pepper, seeded and diced
- ¼ cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 small avocado, diced
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro, optional
- \* A 15 oz. can of pinto beans is about 11/2 cups

Dressing 3 tablespoons lime juice ¼ cup olive oil ¼ teaspoon chili powder 1 clove garlic pressed through a garlic press salt and pepper to taste \*A 15 oz. can of pinto beans



Whisk together dressing ingredients. Mix beans, corn, pepper and onion. Top with dressing. Carefully mix in tomatoes, avocado and cilantro.

### **Black Bean Brownies**

1½ cups cooked cooled, rinsed and black beans\*
2 tablespoons cocoa powder
½ cup quick oats
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup honey or maple syrup
Combine all ingredients, except the last, in a food processor and

blend until completely smooth. Stir in the nuts or chips and pour

¼ cup peanut butter
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
½ teaspoon baking powder
½ cup chopped pecans or chocolate chips (if you omit it will change the taste)



into an 8x8 greased pan. Bake at 350°F for 18 minutes. Cool 10 minutes before trying to cut. They are better if they are cooled and refrigerated.

\*A 15 oz. can of beans is about 1  $\ensuremath{^{\prime\!2}}$  cups

- 1 pound of dried beans = about 6 cups cooked beans
- ¾ cup dried beans = about 1 can of cooked beans
- Some people complain of digestive discomfort after eating beans. Research shows eating beans regularly and using a hot soak when cooking
- reduces this problem.
- Dried beans, especially kidney beans, should not be eaten raw or cooked in a slow cooker. They can contain Phytohaemagglutinin (PHA)
- which is destroyed by cooking to 176°F, a slow cooker may not get that hot.
- https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1799&context=extension\_curall

Michelle Chockley—Lead VMS Ambassador (Cell: 810-210-6685) VMS Log in: https://michigan.volunteersystem.org/UniversalLogin.cfm

### **2021** Courtesy Waiver Recipients

Genesee County gets to choose two EMG's each year to receive a "courtesy waiver." These individuals complete the certification process like everyone else with the exception of not having to pay the \$20.00 recertification fee. This is a one-time waiver. The only criteria is that hours are current. This year Barslund Judd, Program Coordinator, chose:

Roxann Banks – Advanced EMG – Class of 2006 Tamara Johns – Advanced EMG – Class of 2011 Congrats!

### Recertification

January 29, 2021, is when the regular recertification period closes. January 30 through February 12 is the late recertification period and the fee increases from \$20.00 to \$30.00. If you need any help, please let me know. Diane Brady keeps us informed of any payment issues. If you mailed a check, it needed to be postmarked by January 19, 2021. Credit cards will be accepted through January 29, 2021 for regular recertification, and through February 12th if you're late!

#### Out with the VMS and in with Volunteer Central

I hope everyone saw the email from Mary Wilson and Diane Brady in December letting us all know that VMS is going away as it is outdated. We will all be using Volunteer Central, which was the system used for the VSP process. This change is to occur in March and more information will be coming out, so please read your emails! We have not received any training yet, but I assure you we will do our best to help everyone as needed.

### Birthday Flower of the Month, Continued

**Primrose** (*Primula*) – I haven't had any luck with the primrose. The primrose does like to be consistently moist but not wet and tolerates shade. It shouldn't be confused with evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*). For more information:



http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=d616 https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/primula/ http://pss.uvm.edu/pss123/perprimu.html https://michiganflora.net/species.aspx?id=2352 https://extension.psu.edu/pick-a-primrose-for-a-pop-of-perfection https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/article/shooting-star-dodecatheon-meadia/

7

# Ask Extension

### New Name/New URL

Ask Extension is the new name for Ask the Expert; it has a new URL, too: <u>https://ask2.extension.org</u>. If you go to various gardening websites, including the Smart Gardening site at <u>http://migarden.msu.edu</u> you won't find it, yet! You can still use the old links, but if you want to be on the cutting edge, use this one: <u>http://ask2.extension.org</u>!

Once you're at the new site, you can search the national database of previous questions and 'Ask a New Question.' That means you'll have to pick your location (your state) then select a group: MSU - ANR - Gardening in Michigan. The older Ask the Expert links are still working, but in time a complete switch will be made. This may be helpful to you since the Genesee County hotline is still not open due to COVID-19 restrictions. This issue's questions and responses were submitted by another one of our Genesee County experts, Mel Kennedy.

### Question:

I have soil that I pulled from our community garden 3-4 weeks ago before the ground froze. I was waiting on soil test kits so I stored them inside in open plastic bags. The soil remained relatively moist. Is it ok to send it to the lab now or should I wait until spring with a new batch of soil samples? Thank you!!

### Response:

Yes, you can send it to the MSU Soil Lab now. Details on taking and submitting the soil sample are outlined at this link: <u>https://homesoiltest.msu.edu/get-started</u>

Hope this helps!!

### Question:

Is pumpkin and squashes a fruit?

### **Response:**

For Pumpkin: A pumpkin, from a botanist's perspective, is a fruit because it's a product of the seedbearing structure of flowering plants. Even though pumpkin is botanically a fruit, it is predominantly cooked like a vegetable and because pumpkins are less sweet and more savory from a culinary perspective, they are categorized as a vegetable.

For Squash: Since squash contains seeds and develops from the flower-producing part of a plant, it is botanically a fruit. Even though squash is botanically a fruit, it is predominantly cooked like a vegetable.

Hope this helps!!

### Question:

What trees should I plant to replace all the dead Ash in our forest? I would say we've lost 40% of our mixed hardwood forest near Traverse City in the last 10 years & I would like to begin planting new trees.

### **Response:**

This is what you need: Recommended Alternatives to Ash Trees for Michigan's Lower Peninsula\_at this link: http://www.emeraldashborer.info/documents/E-2925.pdf

Hope this helps!!

# **Master Gardener Association Genesee County**

The Master Gardener Association of Genesee County Michigan (MGAGCM) is an association of Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs). Membership is optional for certified Extension Master Gardeners. The MGAGCM provides support to local EMGs through project funding, plant signage, and extra educational opportunities.

### Note from MGAGCM President—Joanne Gensel

Greetings for the New Year!

Now is the time to recertify your Extension Master Gardener status with MSUE. The price increases in February! Do it NOW!

Attached is the form for MGAGCM membership. Many of you have already submitted the completed form to me. Remember that the association will pay the \$5.00 fee once you submit the application form for 2021. If you have problems with the form give me a call and we can fill one out together over the phone.

Newbies (Extension Master Gardener Volunteers in Training): You are invited to join the association. Please don't hesitate. It's a great way to dive in and make contacts and friends. It's also the best way to know what events are going on and who else might be attending and/or participating.

Covid 19 is still with us! UGH

We just don't know when we can be together live. As of this writing no events are scheduled to be "live" this year, but I will say "TBA" to give us hope. MSUE will take the reins again to let us know what procedures we need to follow.

The Master Gardener College will be virtual this year in August. I recommend looking into it. Lots of good value for not much \$\$\$. Watch for posts that Mel puts on our Facebook page for other virtual events of interest.

Loretta is finalizing our speakers for 2021. Zoom presentations will be on meeting evenings (monthly; every 3rd Thursday, except for December). The information will be posted when completed. Watch for an email from Barslund to announce the educational credit.

Stay positive - test negative! We will get through this soon! I'm looking forward to seeing everyone on Zoom until we can see each other in person!

Joanne

#### \*\*MGAGCM = Master Gardener Association Genesee County Michigan (our local level association) (MGAGCM is one of affiliate chapters that make up MMGA, Inc. Membership is NOT required to be an Extension Master Gardener. Membership is for fundraising and social purposes.)

President	Joanne Gensel	jhgensel@gmail.com	(810) 339-0764
1st Vice President	Sabrina VanDyke	brie0212@gmail.com	(810) 407-0808
2nd Vice President	Loretta Ellwood	ldellwood@aol.com	(810) 344-7383
Secretary	Margaret Sowle	leemar4321@frontier.com	(989) 723-6074
Treasurer	Michelle Wareham	m.wareham@yahoo.com	(810) 919-2945
Outreach Director	Kay McCullough	birdieball@aol.com	(810) 635-9341
Communication Di- rector	Mel Kennedy	mkennedy60@charter.net	(810) 275-8822

## Master Gardener Association of Genesee County, MI (MGAGCM) Individual Chapter Membership Application

By completing information, signing and returning application, you are a member of the MGAGCM Chapter. Upon budget approval, MGAGCM will pay MMGA \$5.00 dues.

Name:			
Address		Zip	
Phone	E-mail		
Emergency Contact		Phone	
As a manufact of the Master Cor	dener Association of Con-	ana Ca Mishizana I harahu agu	

As a member of the Master Gardener Association of Genesee Co Michigan, I hereby agree to uphold the mission of Michigan State University Extension and the Master Gardener program.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### MGAGCM Chapter Directory

I give my permission to be in the MGAGCM Chapter Directory which will go out to our members. Contact will only pertain to MGAGCM activities, you will not be added to any other mailing lists. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

### **Photo Release**

I give permission to MGAGCM to use my name, photographic likeness or audio-video recording that includes me while I participating in a Michigan Master Gardener activity. I give permission for my image to be used in all forms and media for advertising, trade or any other lawful purposes and I acknowledge that since my participation is voluntary, I will not receive financial compensation. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

### Complete this form and mail to

MGAGCM

P.O. Box 981

### Grand Blanc, MI 48480

Membership is open to every member who meets the yearly Extension\_Master Gardener (EMG) certification and every new Extension Master Gardener Volunteer in Training (EMGVIT) currently working on basic certification. Per our Chapter Bylaws, all regular members of the Chapter must also be Regular Members of the MMGA (Michigan Master Gardener Association). All members of MGAGCM are members of MMGA by default after submission and receipt of this application.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin or gender.

Questions: Contact Joanne Gensel 810-339-0764 jhg

jhgensel@gmail.com

### Rest Areas, Continued

We received many comments and questions about the plants. The travelers and truck drivers were very complimentary and thankful for our efforts. Even with mask wearing, we were able to educate and enlighten people about the environment, pollinators and plants. We answered many other questions. This is one of the more rewarding aspects of working at the rest areas. Also, I was introduced to grasses at the Dodge Road site. They were spectacular and generated a lot of questions, which meant I had to learn about them. The birdhouse at the Clio site had literally fallen to the ground over the winter and was in pieces. There was no putting it back together this time. A new EMG trainee, Mary Powell, had one that she built and painted. *(See photo)* She brought her tools and installed it. It was awesome and a welcome addition to the Clio site. I'd like to thank Mary Powell, Amy Lazar and Sue Hendrix, all new trainees, for their help throughout the summer and a special thank-you to Debbie Glasstetter who helped at Fenton. It couldn't have been done without them.



Genesee County MDOT Rest Area Visitors in 2019					
Rest Area Site	Daily Visitors	Yearly Visitors			
US-23, Fenton	1,437	524,680			
I-75, Dodge Rd	2,500	943,364			
I-75, Clio	2,190	799,387			
I-69, Swartz Creek	1,670	617,427			

One of the values of us working with the MDOT rest areas is that it gives the Extension Master Gardener Program visibility to both state and non-state travelers. We don't know the results of the 2020 Daily and Yearly counts, yet; they will probably go down due to less travel taking place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. But, so you have an idea of the number of visitors that stop by the MDOT rest areas that give us exposure, here are the statistics from 2019.





Previous years pictures from US 23 (left) and I 69 (above) Rest Areas.

### Master Gardener Association Genesee County

### Websites

MGAGCM website-<u>www.geneseecountymg.org</u>

MGAGCM Facebook-www.facebook.com/groups/216904628327310/

MMGA, Inc. website-www.michiganmastergardener.org

MMGA, Inc. Facebook- <u>www.facebook.com/MichiganMG/</u>

### MGAGCM Events:

- Jan. 21: Galls Lori Imboden, Consumer Hort Educator from Oakland County Project ID: Environmental Stewardship - Integrated Pest Mgmt (IPM)
- Feb. 18: Gardening for Pollinators Jay Blair Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: IPM - Pollinators
- Mar. 18: Comfort, Ease & Simplicity Jan Bills Project ID: Community: Beautification - Public Areas
- Ap. 15: To Be Announced
- May ?: possibility of Native Plant Sale or in September...depending upon restrictions
- May 20: TBA Project ID:
- June 17: TBA
- June ?: Maybe–if restrictions are lifted Genesee County Extension Master Gardener Tour 2021 Project ID: Community: Beautification – Public Areas (If you visit all the sites, you'll get 3.5 Ed. Hrs.)
- July TBA: Maybe–if restrictions are lifted... MGAGCM July Picnic
- Aug. 19: **TBA** Project ID: Food: General Gardens
- Sept. 16: TBA

Project ID:

- Oct. 2: Probably not? Fall Into Spring
- Oct. 21: TBA

Project ID:

### Nov. 18: Holiday Party or speaker depending upon restrictions

2021 MGAGCM meetings and or presentations are held on the third Thursday of each month via Zoom until MSUE gives permission for in-person meetings at which point, they will be held at the GCCARD Building, 601 N. Saginaw Street, Flint, MI 48502-2009 (except December & unless otherwise noted).